(ii) The curricula of studies should be thoroughly revised so as to meet the requirements of the people of different localities, in accordance with their avocations in life.

(iii) More time should be allotted for imparting practical instruction.

(iv) The period of instruction in schools should be enhanced to 6 hours a day and the examinations should be conducted in the month of December as of old.

(v) The Inspecting staff of the Education Department should be reduced to four Inspectors, one for each Division and one Inspectress for girls' schools.

(vi) A committee of officials and non-officials should be appointed at an early date to go into the question of educational reform in the State.

DEWAN'S REPLY: I thank you, Mr. Subrahmanya Pillai, for confining yourself to one subject out of the long list you first put in.

It is not denied that the educational problem is urgent and that some reform is necessary. As I have already said, it is proposed to constitute an Educational Reforms Committee as soon as possible; and your suggestions, no doubt, will be carefully considered.

135. Rural reconstruction.

MR. C. M. CHERIYAN (*Vaikam taluk*) said that every modern civilized state had to bestow its earnest attention on education, means of communication, sanitation and rural reconstruction. It was a matter for gratification that the Government were devoting proper attention to the first three items. But proper attention was not paid in the matter of developing the rural parts of the State. Out of the total population of 5 millions, about four and a half millions lived in rural areas. The major portion of the State's revenue was contributed by the inhabitants of these areas. The Government were therefore bound to pay greater attention to rural needs.

The rural needs of a country could be best attended to by the formation of Village Panchayats as had been done in the neighbouring State of Cochin. It was more than 10 years since Panchayats had been introduced in all the villages in the Cochin State and the institutions were found to be of considerable benefit to the people. Civil cases involving small amounts were decided by the Panchayats. They also brought to the notice of the Government the local needs regarding roads, tanks, wells, minor irrigation works, etc. On the Government granting the necessary funds, the Panchayats undertook to carry out public works also. The Cochin Government allotted every year about Rs. 4 lakhs for local needs to be carried out by Village Panchayats.

The urgent necessity of forming Village Panchayats had been repeatedly represented at several past sessions of the Assembly and the Government had also promised to take up the question; but nothing had been done in the matter yet. Village Panchayats should be formed in the immediate future in each village or group of villages and they should be worked on the same lines as in the Cochin State.

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The member next spoke about the co-operative movement in the State and the working of the co-operative societies. Co operative movement was greatly beneficial to the poor people of the country. There were altogether 1,900 societies in the State. For the efficient working of these societies the Government should exercise greater control over them. The officers of the Co-operative Department did not receive sufficient encouragement at the hands of the Government. They had not also the requisite training in co-operative work. The inspection work done by the Inspectors of the department was not satisfactory. The co-operative societies, if efficiently worked, would be a source of unmixed blessing to the people at large. The introduction of Village Panchayats combined with the encouragement of the co-operative movement in the State would greatly help the Government in the rural reconstruction of the State.

DEWANS' REPLY: The Village Panchayat Regulation, Mr. Cheriyan, is in force. Five *pakuthies* are going to have Village Panchayats; and, no doubt, if the experiment is successful, it will be extended.

Government view with sympathy and watch with careful attention the activities of the co-operative societies. But it is a matter in which non-officials could help very much. It depends very much on that; in what directions their activities can be extended will be explored.

136. Schemes for the development of the State.

MR. K. GEORGE JOSEPH (*Minachil taluk, Group II*) said that any scheme for the development of the State mainly consisted in opening up the country, in utilising in all possible ways its industrial resources, in affording facilities for trade and in providing increased and better civic amenities for the people.

The construction of the Quilon-Ernakulam and the Ettumanur-Mundakayam railway lines was the most important item to be considered in any scheme devised to open up the country. It had been stated that the project estimates and plans of all the lines surveyed, were under preparation, except the estimate for the Trivandrum-Nagercoil line, which had been completed. But it was not known for what particular lines estimates and plans were under preparation and whether the Government intended to arrange for the construction of these lines in the near future. The construction of the Quilon-Ernakulam line, the Ettumanur-Mundakayam line and the Trivandrum-Nagercoil line should be taken up immediately. At the Investiture Durbar, His Highness the Maha Raja stated that, in spite of the prominent place which Travancore occupied among the Indian States, she had not received her due recognition from the outside world. Geographical isolation was one of the main causes for this obscurity. This defect could be removed by providing greater facilities for traffic which people outside could rely on at all times and seasons. It might be argued that motor traffic would fulfil the purposes of railways. But it was only a minor means of

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